



General Certificate of Education

History 1041

Specification

Unit HIS2J

Report on the Examination

2010 examination – January series

Further copies of this Report are available to download from the AQA Website: www.aqa.org.uk

Copyright © 2010 AQA and its licensors. All rights reserved.

COPYRIGHT

AQA retains the copyright on all its publications. However, registered centres for AQA are permitted to copy material from this booklet for their own internal use, with the following important exception: AQA cannot give permission to centres to photocopy any material that is acknowledged to a third party even for internal use within the centre.

Set and published by the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance.

Unit HIS2J

Unit 2J: Britain and Appeasement, 1919–1940

General Comments

In this third sitting of examination for Unit HIS2J of the current History Specification the paper proved to be accessible for the majority of candidates. All scripts were marked in accordance with the Mark Scheme. All candidates attempted the compulsory, sources-based question (Question 1), whilst approximately an equal number of students attempted Question 2 or Question 3.

As in previous examinations, the vast majority of candidates found the time allowed of one and a half hours manageable in terms of answering two full questions. A few spent rather too much time on answering the (a) questions which carried 12 marks each to the relative neglect of the higher tariff (b) questions carrying 24 marks each. In most cases where this became a problem it was the first (a) question answered which had too much time devoted to it. Another small minority chose to answer each (b) question before its accompanying (a) question, or in a few cases to answer both (b) questions before the (a) questions. These approaches are not recommended and there was a tendency where they were deployed for material included in the response to the (b) question to be repeated in that to part (a). As previously reported on the examinations held in 2009, answering the part questions in the 'wrong order' led to loss of continuity (in terms of knowledge and understanding) between the two parts of each single full question.

Marks awarded to individual candidates ranged from 65 to those in single figures. As in 2009, scripts which achieved high marks, or indeed those responses to part questions with marks in Levels 4 or 5, were awarded them because they addressed the assessment objectives within the context and content of writing about particular historical issues with deployment of knowledge relevantly, communicated their understanding effectively, analysed and had conceptual awareness. Answers which received the lowest marks almost always displayed very limited secure knowledge, or were confused, or generalised. Most candidates performed fairly evenly across their responses, although for a significant minority performance lacked balance in that Question 1 was decidedly better answered than the other. This was usually caused by relative lack of knowledge for the 'weaker' response and the sensible use of source material to gain marks for Question 1. Again there were some candidates who achieved a relatively higher Level of Response in one part of a question than in the other. Some of them – and indeed others - answered the (a) parts better than the (b). This was particularly evident in responses to Question 2 and 3.

Quality of Written Communication was generally satisfactory. Very few scripts were illegible to the point of the examiner not being able to follow the argument or point being made. The main spelling mistakes of proper nouns were of 'Clemenceau', 'Abyssinia' and 'Hoare Laval'.

Question 1

- (a) Question 1 was the compulsory, source based question. Marks awarded ranged from 34 to low, single figures. The main weakness in many responses was to either paraphrase the Sources A and B with no commentary or to write two separate paragraphs (one on Source A and one on Source B) without explicitly stating differences or similarities. Better candidates were able to clearly state differences and similarities, both quoting from the two sources and using their own knowledge to evaluate them (Level 3). Many candidates' responses got no further than Level 2 because they failed to identify both differences and similarities. Other struggled because they were only able to use the sources and did not apply any own knowledge. Again better answers made intelligent use of own knowledge to highlight good historical understanding – 'the Peace Ballot', 'Oxford Union debate', 'Fulham by-election' were all usefully deployed. Candidates found Level 4 more difficult to access as they failed to develop their comparisons and therefore did not demonstrate a good historical understanding of the views expressed in Sources A and B.
- (b) The overall standard of responses was better than those of part (a). Most candidates were able to use Sources A, B and C to argue whether or not Great Britain's appeasement of Germany during the inter-war years was misguided. Also, candidates found it much easier for part (b) to deploy their own knowledge in order to enhance their responses. Again a common mistake was for candidates to promote a one-sided argument (maximum L3/16 marks). Better candidates produced balanced answers making sensible use of the sources and deploying their own knowledge to good effect, thus accessing both Levels 4 and 5. Responses at both the higher levels contained intelligent use of both traditional and revisionist historians' views to enhance their answers. Weaker candidates ignored the appeasement of Germany in particular and simply assessed the appeasement of Germany, Italy and Japan (obviously sections relating to Italy and Japan were irrelevant). Others confused appeasement with the work of the League of Nations and therefore produced unfocussed answers.

Question 2

- (a) This question proved to be a good discriminator. Many candidates failed to successfully deploy a good knowledge base because they did not interpret the question sharply enough. They simply wrote about the Allies' views (in this case Great Britain, France and the USA) on the treatment of Germany at the Treaty of Versailles without addressing the question of 'why they were different.' Stronger answers linked the ideologies of these nations and their experiences of the war to their specific views and thus provided a foundation to explore the differences between Great Britain and the other two major allies. Weaker candidates merely quoted Allied views on the proposals of the Treaty of Versailles (some at great length), whilst others only compared Great Britain and France, and failed to mention the USA.
- (b) Again this question proved to be good discriminator. Many candidates found it quite difficult to keep within the parameters of 1919 to 1929 and therefore wrote irrelevantly about Great Britain's treatment of Hitler's Germany during the 1930s. However, there were a good number of strong answers that explained Keynes's views with regard to Germany's treatment at the Treaty of Versailles and possible consequences, and how these views directly influenced Great Britain's treatment of Germany in the 1920s (Level 3) and went on to explore other factors such as Great Britain's weak economy, the growth of pacifism, British public opinion regarding the war, need for a trading partner and the moderation of the German government post-1923 (Levels 4 and 5). A feature of better responses was balanced argument supported by a good range of appropriately selected evidence and a good understanding of historical interpretations. A small minority of candidates produced an explained judgement based on a range of explained factors

(Level 5). Weaker candidates made no link between Keynes's views and Great Britain's actions during the 1920's. Some candidates attempted the question with no idea about Keynes or his views.

Question 3

- (a) This question produced a full range of marks and on balance was the better answered of the two optional questions. Most candidates were able to identify a range of reasons for the setting up of the Stresa Front. Better candidates moved on to explain these reasons (including to provide a front against Hitler's rearming Germany, to strengthen ties with Italy and France, to reinforce French security, to keep Italy and Germany apart). Top answers included this explained range of reasons, whilst differentiating between long and short-term reasons. Weaker candidates struggled with the chronology of the period and therefore confused the dates of various events (the Stresa Front pre-dating the Austrian putsch for instance).
- (b) This part question was much better answered than 2(b) with over half the candidates gaining marks in Level 3 and above. Again some candidates struggled with the chronology of the question and included sections of irrelevant information from the 1920s. Others introduced the appeasement of Germany during the 1930s which was again irrelevant. However, there were many good quality answers which examined the key incidents during the 1930s (including the Austrian putsch, the Stresa Front, the Abyssinian crisis, the Hoare- Laval Pact, the Anglo- German Naval Treaty, the Munich meetings, the Rome- Berlin Axis, the Pact of Steel and Albania) and explained their relevance in relation to the appeasement of Italy during the 1930s (i.e. success/lack of success), thereby accessing Levels 4 and 5. Some candidates grasped the full complexity of the question and with the aid of appropriate historical interpretation explained clearly the flow and eventual ebb of successful Anglo-Italian relations based on Great Britain's appeasement policy (Level 5).

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.